

How to Love One Another, Part 2 - Romans 1:11-12 – January 23rd, 2011

- This is part two of a series titled; "How to Love One Another." We're seeing how that this letter to the Romans is really a love letter.
- The Apostle Paul is rising from the pages of scripture as an example to us, in how he's showing us, how it is that we can love all people.

1. By being faithful to one another (Verse 8)

- Paul expresses his thanks to God through Christ for all in Rome because their faith was being reported all over the world.
- One reason news of them had spread, was because Rome was a most difficult place to not only be in the faith, but to remain faithful.
- The message I communicate when I'm faithful is; "I love you." Conversely, the message I communicate when unfaithful is; "I love self."

2. By praying for one another (Verses 9-10)

- Paul then says; "as God is his witness, he constantly remembers them, continually prays for them, and that he longs come to them."
- It's because Paul loved them much, that he prayed for them much, and the more he prayed for them, the more love he had for them.
- The lesson here is quite clear, in that we only pray for people we love, which is probably why the one we pray for the most is our self.

3. By giving to one another (Verse 11)

(11) I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—

- v11 Paul tells them how he longs to see them, so that he may impart to them, some spiritual gift with the hopes it will strengthen them.
- Notice how the beloved Apostle writes using verbs that express such desire and emotion. He longs to see them so he can give to them.
- In our day, we would say; "I can't wait to see you! I'm so excited about the gift I have for you. It's a spiritual gift, and you need this gift."
- I see giving to one another the same way I see praying for one another. Just as I pray for those I love, so too will I give to those I love.
- The one to whom I give the most is the one for whom I love the most. The one to whom I give the least is the one for whom I love the least.
- I believe this is why Paul couldn't wait to see them. He loved them, and it was because of this love for them that he wanted to give to them.
- About now you may be thinking; "yes, I know I give to them that I love, but I don't really understand how I can love them that I will give."
- Lest you think that's a play on words, hear me out first. I want to make an attempt at unlocking this life changing truth here in God's Word.
- If I'm having a problem loving another, I need to first try giving to another. Once I start giving to them, I'll start having more love for them.
- One might argue that I don't give to them, or even pray for them, because I don't feel like it. However, the feeling will follow the giving.
- The fact of the matter is; that's how God wired us. He made us in such a way that our feelings will follow the act of giving, and even praying.
- When you consider what Jesus said in Matthew's gospel, you realize that it's an astonishing revelation about how our feelings follow giving.

Matthew 6:21 NIV For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

4. By encouraging one another (Verse 12)

(12) that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.

- v12 Paul expounds on why he longs to see them by saying that both he and they may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.
- The "feelings" were mutual. Not only did Paul love them, they loved Paul. It's for this reason that they would encourage each other.
- Once again, we see this common denominator in how it is that we will only encourage those for whom we love and care about.
- If you don't believe that, let alone do that, then just think about the people who you don't love or care about. Frankly, you don't even like them.
- I would suggest to you that you are probably discouraging them, and you may even be very condescending in how you talk to them.
- When we, like Paul, encourage others in the faith, we're making an investment, in that we have a vested interest in them doing well.
- The litmus test to know if you are doing this will be in how you respond, and react to others when something good or bad happens to them.

Romans 12:15 KJV Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

- The truth of the matter is, we are more prone to rejoice when others weep, and weep when others rejoice.
- I find it interesting that the Apostle Paul emphasizes the encouragement as being mutual. In other words, they would encourage one another.
- The question becomes; how can I be more encouraging to others? What, and from where, do I find that source of encouragement?
- I think we need look no further than the comforting and encouraging Word of God. That's how they both blessed and encouraged one another.
- Let's be honest, sometimes we just need a hug from someone, vis-a-vis the Word of God. Often times it comes in the form of a specific word.
- Here's how it works; a friend sees you're down, and in prayer will lift you up. They'll speak to God for you, then speak a word from God to you.

Psalms 119:50 AMP This is my comfort and consolation in my affliction: that Your word has revived me and given me life.